

Personal Hygiene Tips

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- Wash the outer genital area daily with mild soap and water.
- Do not use vaginal deodorant sprays or hygiene products, including deodorant tampons, because they may allow germs to grow.
- Do not use petroleum jelly or oil in your vagina. You can use a contraceptive foam, cream or a water-based jelly.
- Take a tub bath or shower every day to prevent infection.
- Change your sanitary pad or tampon at least every four hours. Change more often if your flow is heavy.
- **NEVER** wear a tampon for more than four hours. It is best to wear a pad at night.
- Wash your hands before and after changing your pad or tampon.
- Do not use super-absorbent tampons because you may end up using them for more than four hours.
- Wash your hands before and after changing your pad or tampon.



For more information

Contact: _____

Telephone: _____

Women, Hygiene & Infections

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What's Normal?

It is normal for a woman to have a vaginal discharge that changes throughout the woman's monthly cycle. It increases and becomes slippery, clear, and stretchable around the time of ovulation (when the egg is released). At the end of the cycle, the discharge is thicker and the amount may be less.



Signs of Possible Infections

Remember the word **BODIES**:

Burning during urination

Odor different from normal

Discoloration (redness) around vagina

Itching

Excessive or **unusual** discharge
(greenish, yellow, brown, off-white, or bloody)

Sexual intercourse is painful

Men and women do not always have signs of infections.

WARNING: You may have a more serious infection if you have the following symptoms: pain in your lower belly, pain in the lower back of your legs, chills or fever, nausea, or severe pain during sex. It is important to seek medical attention for these problems.

Treatment for Infections

If you have any reason to think that you or your sex partner might have an infection, it is best not to have sex.

Seek medical attention right away. You will need a pelvic exam to find out what kind of infection you have. Your sex partner may also need to be treated.

If you get treated, but your sex partner does not, your infection can come back. An untreated infection can spread in your body and cause more problems. It may prevent you from having children in the future.



How to Prevent Infections

- Wear cotton panties or panties with a cotton crotch.
- Wear panty hose with a cotton crotch.
- Wipe from front to back after a bowel movement.
- Blot instead of wipe after you urinate.
- Have your partner use condoms to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.
- Do not douche unless your primary care provider tells you to.
- Stay healthy because many women find that they have trouble with infections when their health is poor.

